GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:228
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2007
DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AIDS PATIENTS
Yadav Shri Parasnath

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether incidents of discrimination and negligence on the part of the Doctors and Employees in the treatment of AIDS patients have been reported in certain Government Hospitals of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the action taken by the Government against the Doctors and Employees found guilty; and

(d) the details of the steps taken by the Government to stop the recurrence of such incidents in future?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)to(d) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 228 FOR 29TH AUGUST, 2007

Three cases of discriminatory/negligent behaviour on the part of doctors in Government hospitals of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi have so far been reported. In Bihar, the HIV status of the patient was publicly displayed on the bed of the patient admitted in the Darbhanga Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the year 2005. Though the patient was provided the required treatment, the Bihar State AIDS Control Society filed a case in Darbhanga civil court in 2005 against four doctors of DMCH for violating the principles of confidentiality.

In the second incident, it was alleged that doctors refused to deliver a pregnant woman in Meerut Medical College, Uttar Pradesh in June 2007. On receipt of the complaint, two senior doctors from NACO were deputed to inquire into the incident and the matter was taken up with the Government of Uttar Pradesh who immediately placed the two doctors under suspension and instituted an enquiry.

Regarding the third incident, a young girl lost her life due to delay in diagnosis of HIV infection at AIIMS in March, 2007. An enquiry was conducted by NACO and corrective measures initiated.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that there is stigmatisation and discriminatory attitudes among health care providers towards HIV infected persons in the public as well as private sector. In order to minimise such attitudes and behaviour as well as delay in diagnosis and treatment, efforts are being made to intensively train all doctors and para-medical and service staff in all Government hospitals to impress upon them about the HIV infection, the need to routinely practice infection control procedures and also ensure the availability of post-exposure prophylaxis which has been found to be effective in protecting the health providers against HIV infection in case of any accidental exposure. Similarly, training is being carried out for health care providers in the private sector. 56,000 providers have been trained during the last year. NACO has formulated a draft law on stigma and discrimination towards HIV infected persons which will lend greater teeth to enforce the guidelines against stigma and discrimination by health providers against HIV infected persons.